CASE STUDY UNIT

ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

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ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
LEVEL A · CASE 1

Background

Student: Sam

Age: 14.2

Grade: 8th

Scenario

Sam is an 8th grader who is not finishing his work due to his off-task behaviors. According to his records, this has been an ongoing problem since third grade. His grades have become progressively worse this year. His academic grade in his social studies class (and in most of his other classes) is at 65% because assignments are rarely completed or are done very haphazardly. When Sam does start an assignment, he often rushes quickly through the assignment, making a number of errors and overlooking information. His teacher reports the following types of off-task behaviors: reading books and magazines, drawing and doodling, daydreaming, and talking to friends and neighbors. These behaviors occur most often during independent work times and rarely during large group/whole class activities. Based on the assignments he completes and his class participation in group activities, Sam's social studies teacher believes he is capable of the grade-level work. From the information gathered, his teacher has decided that Sam will achieve the following goals within six weeks:

- Increase the number of independent assignments completed
- Earn 80% or higher on all completed assignments

Possible Strategies

- Specific Praise
- Criterion-Specific Rewards
- Choice-Making

Assignment

1. Read the STAR Sheets on the possible strategies listed above.
2. Write a summary of each strategy, including its purpose.
3. Describe why each strategy might be used to help Sam meet one or more of his goals.

ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
LEVEL A · CASE 2

Background

Student: Heather

Age: 8.1

Grade: 3rd

Scenario

Heather is a third grader in Ms. Reyes' classroom of 24 students. Heather enjoys school and often arrives early so she can spend time with friends on the playground. Ms. Reyes, however, is concerned because Heather is disrupting the class. She reports that Heather calls out answers during lessons, speaks over others during class discussion, and talks to neighbors during group and independent work. For 25 minutes each day, Heather and two peers receive resource room support in math. Heather's resource room teacher has not noticed any of these behaviors. Ms. Reyes decides to set these goals for Heather for the next nine weeks:

- Raise her hand and wait to be called before speaking
- Decrease interruptions and wait for others to finish before adding to discussions
- Complete independent work quietly

Possible Strategies

- Effective Rules
- Contingent Instructions
- Group Contingency

Assignment

1. Read the STAR Sheets on the possible strategies listed above.
2. Write a summary of each strategy, including its purpose.
3. Describe why each strategy might be used to help Heather meet one or more of her goals.

ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
LEVEL B · CASE 1

Background

Student: Doug

Age: 7.9

Grade: 2nd Grade, 2nd Semester

Scenario

Doug loves science and hands-on activities. He is extremely interested in dinosaurs and robots, and enjoys using the computer for games. Doug has shared that he likes putting together "Lego" sets and has brought several in to the classroom to share. Doug, however, is not performing well at school. His teacher and his parents are concerned. He is failing grade level requirements in reading and math, yet he has tested at grade level in these areas. Doug does have an identified learning disability and receives resource room assistance in written expression.

Doug gets easily frustrated when he has to copy and write assignments in any subject. He does have a computer available to use in the classroom as needed. His second grade teacher, Mr. McGrady, believes Doug is capable of the work required in class. Mr. McGrady has noted that Doug participates in class discussions and hands-on activities; however, he avoids and rarely starts assignments by himself. Mr. McGrady reports that while other students begin assignments, Doug can be found fiddling with "Lego gadgets" and drawing robots. Getting Doug started on most independent work activities is like pulling teeth. Based on this information, Mr. McGrady has selected these goals for Doug to achieve within the next three months:

- Begin independent work assignments promptly
- Increase the number of completed assignments

Possible Strategies

- Specific Praise
- Criterion Specific Rewards
- Choice-Making
- Effective Rules
- Contingent Instructions
- Group Contingency

Assignment

1. Read the STAR Sheets on the possible strategies listed above.
2. Select one strategy you feel would best address Doug's goals.
3. State why you selected this strategy to address the goals.
4. Describe how you would implement this strategy in your classroom and any cautions for its use.

ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
LEVEL B · CASE 2

Background

Student: Ellie

Age: 14

Grade: 9th grade, 1st semester

Scenario

Ellie is a 9th grader who has just moved to the community from another city. She is quiet and withdrawn and doesn't appear to have made many new friends. She often sits alone in the back of the classroom and doesn't volunteer responses, ideas, or engage in class discussions. While she does most, if not all, of the independent work required of her, she does not actively participate in any partner or cooperative activities. She avoids group contact by reading or drawing quietly or asking to be excused to go to the restroom, locker, or office. From all the information the teachers have gathered and their observations, Ellie appears to be able to read and write on grade level.

Mr. Salinas, Ellie's English teacher, is quite concerned because her nonparticipation in group activities is beginning to cause some resentment from her peers. Some students have stated they don't want to be placed in a group with Ellie because, "She won't help out and it just drags us down. It's like she doesn't even know we're there." Academically, this is also impacting Ellie's grade in English class because several of the semester competencies and assignments require peer and group interaction. There are upcoming small group literature discussion activities and peer editing/writing support groups. Mr. Salinas believes Ellie is capable of the work and sets the following goals for her to achieve by the end of the semester:

- Increase her participation in class discussions and conversations
- Effectively interact within literature discussion activities and peer editing/writing groups

Possible Strategies

- Specific Praise
- Criterion Specific Rewards
- Choice-Making
- Effective Rules
- Contingent Instructions
- Group Contingency

Assignment

1. Review each of the STAR sheets on the possible strategies listed above.
2. Select one strategy that you feel would best address Ellie's goals.
3. State why you selected this strategy to address the goals.
4. Describe how you would implement this strategy in your classroom and any cautions for its use.

ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
LEVEL C · CASE 1

Background

Student: Zach; Patrick

Age: 10.10; 11.4

Grade: 5th grade, 2nd semester; 5th grade, 2nd semester

Scenario

Patrick and Zach are 5th graders in Mrs. Anderson's class of 25 students. The class has 13 boys and 12 girls. Three students in the class have identified disabilities and receive resource room support. Zach is one of these students and has a specific learning disability in reading. He receives 30 minutes of resource room support daily to address reading goals. Zach enjoys math. He especially enjoyed the geometry unit the class just completed. He is typically a quiet worker during independent work time. It's not unusual for Zach to come in during recesses or stay after school to feed the class guinea pig.

Patrick, another student, likes participating in classroom skits and plays. He enjoys telling funny stories and "being in the limelight." Patrick is an average student academically. He participates in community sports and especially likes softball. Other students say he "doesn't stop talking."

Mrs. Anderson is about ready to pull her hair out because of a growing number of disruptions that have been occurring in the classroom. Patrick and Zach seem to be magnets for these disruptions. Mrs. Anderson has observed that Patrick and Zach appear to be "at each other" constantly. Not only do they get off task at these times, but the rest of the class is drawn into spectator sport. Unfortunately during these disruptions, little classroom work or instruction gets done. Mrs. Anderson has noted the following behaviors of concern:

Zach	***Patrick***
Responds angrily to teasing by yelling back and sometimes even crying	*Teases Zach (and other students at times) by name calling, comments, etc.*
Argues with Patrick	*Calls out during class or gives unrelated or inappropriate information during class discussion when called on*
Pushes Patrick if he doesn't respond to his requests or comments	*Argues with Zach (or other students) when asked to stop teasing or halt other undesired behavior*

Assignment

1. Create a priority list of 2 critical goals each for Patrick and Zach.
2. Identify 2-3 strategies you could use to address the goals you listed.
3. Provide a rationale of why you selected these strategies.
4. Choose 1 strategy to implement immediately and justify your selection and discuss what information you used to support this.
5. Describe how you would implement this strategy if you were the classroom teacher, and any possible cautions or considerations that you should be aware of.

ENCOURAGING APPROPIATE BEHAVIOR
SPECIFIC PRAISE

★ What a STAR Sheet is...

A STAR (STrategies And Resources) Sheet provides you with a description of a well-researched strategy that can help you solve the case studies in this unit.

What It Is...

Specific praise includes verbal or written statements to a student that recognize a desired or correct behavior. Praise can function as a tool for instruction and for increasing social and academic behaviors. To be effective, the student must view the attention provided through praise as pleasurable or motivational.

What the Research and Resources Say...

- Praise can be used to build positive relationships with students and assist in creating a supportive classroom environment (Brophy, 1998; Emmer, Evertson, & Worsham, 2003; Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993).
- Powerful, appropriate praise is: nonjudgmental; specific and descriptive; contingent and immediate; and sincere (Brophy, 1998; Duncan, Kemple & Smith, 200; Weinstein, 2003).
- A variety of types of praise should be used to avoid overuse and satiation (Brophy, 1998). In some cases praise should be used in conjunction with other types of reinforcements or rewards (Duncan et al., 2000; Kerr & Nelson, 2002).
- All students need to experience success. Ensure that each student receives some form of sincere and accurate praise or recognition (Evertson, Emmer, & Worsham., 2003).
- Some students, particularly adolescents, do not find public praise reinforcing or pleasant (Emmer et al., 2003; Maag, 2001; Weinstein, 2003).
- Teachers must adjust their use of praise and how it is delivered for individual students. Some students have long histories of obtaining attention through misbehavior rather than appropriate conduct. For these students, combining praise with other forms of reinforcement and behavior strategies may be needed. (Piazza et al., 1999).
- The effectiveness of the praise depends on the "richness" of the reinforcement currently available in the student's enviroment (Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991).

Tips for Implementation...

- Deliver Effective Praise Statements
    a. Be nonjudgmental. Praise the student's accomplishment, or behavior, not his/her achievement when compared with that of others.

        Example: "Doug, you really did a great job of being prepared for class today by bringing your pencils and notebook."

        Nonexample: "Doug I'm glad you brought your supplies today like everyone else."

- Be specific and include detail.
    a. Avoid global positive statements.

    Example: "Wow, Keesha! You used several vivid terms in your paragraph to describe the story setting. Your use of adjectives has really increased."

    Nonexample. "Wow, Keesha! Great writing today!"

- Be sincere and credible.
    a. Use statements that underscore the student's actual efforts and accomplishments. Make sure your voice and body language match the content of your message.

    Example: "Hector, you set up the multiplication problem correctly, placing all numbers in the appropriate columns. You are ready now to work on the next part of the problem."

    Nonexample: "Hector, you really did a great job solving your multiplication problems today."

- Deliver immediate praise in close proximity to the student for whom the praise is intended. Move around the classroom frequently so you can be prepared to "catch them being good."
- Utilize a variety of verbal and written praise.
- Give praise to several students at the same time. Or, provide praise privately to avoid the embarrassment some students feel when being singled out in public situations.

- Evaluate and Adjust Praise
    a. Take time to evaluate if your praise is working. Ask yourself:

    - Is the praise effective? Do the students seem to like the attention provided when I praise?

    - Do they maintain or improve the praised behavior?

    - Do I provide each student some form of praise daily?

    - Do I maintain a positive balance of positive to negative statements in my classroom?

    - Do I include variety in my use of praise?

    b. Revise the type, delivery, or frequency of praise as needed based upon individual student responses or needs.

    c. Use frequent praise when new behavior and skills are taught. As the skill is mastered, this frequency should be gradually reduced to a more intermittent schedule.

Keep in Mind...

- Effective praise can be used to create a positive classroom atmosphere and enhance relationships with students. When it is effectively used it may prevent certain types of behavior.
- Effective praise should be individualized for students in its content and delivery.
- Teachers must ensure that positive exchanges and statements occur more frequently than reprimands in their interactions with students.

Resources...

Brophy, J. (1998). *Motivating students to learn*. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Duncan, T. K., Kemple, K. M., & Smith, T. M. (2000). Reinforcement in developmentally appropriate early childhood classrooms. *Childhood Education, 76*, 194-203.

Emmer, E. T., Evertson, C. M., & Worsham, M. E. (2003) *Classroom management for secondary teachers* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Evertson, C. M., Emmer, E. T., & Worsham, M. E. (2003) *Classroom management for elementary teachers* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Kerr, M. M., & Nelson, C. M. (2002). *Strategies for addressing behavior problems in the classroom* (4th ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Maag, J. W. (2001). Rewarded by punishment: Reflections on the disuse of positive reinforcement in schools. *Exceptional Children, 67*, 173-186.

Piazza, C.C., Bowman, L. G., Contruci, S. A., Delia, M. D., Adelinis, J. D. & Goh, H. L. (1999). An evaluation of the properties of attention and reinforcement for destructive and appropriate behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 32*, 434-449.

Shores, R. E., Gunter, P. L., & Jack, S. L. (1993). Classroom management strategies: Are they setting events for coercion. *Behavioral Disorders, 18*, 92-102.

Sulzer-Azaroff, B. & Mayer, G. R. (1991). *Behavior analysis for lasting change* (2nd ed.). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

Weinstein, C. S. (2003). *Secondary classroom management: Lessons from research and practice* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Encouraging Appropriate Behavior
Criterion-Specific Rewards

★ What a STAR Sheet is...

A STAR (STrategies And Resources) Sheet provides you with a description of a well-researched strategy that can help you solve the case studies in this unit.

What It Is...

Criterion-specific rewards can be used as part of a proactive intervention for managing classroom behavior. Students may earn criterion-specific rewards such as activities, privileges, and tangible incentives after the occurrence of an identified target behavior(s) at a set level of performance.

What the Research and Resources Say...

- A reinforcement system supports students in making connections between a behavior and its consequences (Alberto & Troutman, 2003).
- Effective, criterion-specific rewards are: delivered immediately; contingent; desirable and appealing to students; planned; and realistically attainable (Martella, Nelson, & Marchand-Martella, 2003).
- Rewards should be simple to implement, easy to record, inexpensive, and nondisruptive (Levin & Nolan, 2000; Smith & Rivera, 1993).
- Reinforcers which are selected by students themselves are often more motivating than those selected for them (Alberto & Troutman, 2003; Smith & Rivera, 1993).
- A variety of positive reinforcers should be available over time to prevent rewards from losing their effectiveness or motivating properties (Jones & Jones, 1998).
- Several types of reinforcers can function as rewards, including social, activity/privilege, and tangible reinforcers (Alberto & Troutman, 2003; Emmer, Evertson, & Worsham, 2003). *(See Types of Criterion-Specific Rewards Chart at the end of this STAR Sheet)*
- For learning new and/or reinforcing difficult skills, more intensive rewards such as tangible or material rewards may be warranted. Initially, these may need to be delivered on a more frequent basis until a skill is learned or mastered (Kameenui & Darch, 1995).

Tips for Implementation...

- Identify Specific Behaviors
    a. Identify and list behaviors that need to be increased for the student to be successful. Begin with the behaviors likely to have the most significant impact for the student's success in learning.
    b. Describe in specific terms the behavior and criteria necessary for the reward. Make sure to address the "what", "where," "when," and/or "how" in describing the behavior.
- Select Rewards
    a. Brainstorm a list of rewards that are feasible, affordable, age appropriate, and complement your learning environment and teaching style.
    b. Check school and district policies regarding the use of any activity, material, or edible rewards. You will also need to verify any individual student needs, health or otherwise (e. g. food allergies), which may limit your use of these types of rewards.

c. Validate your reward possibilities. Use multiple means to garner input: seek student input on possible rewards; observe students during activities and free time (note types of activities, interactions, and materials they select during these times); and get input from significant others (e.g., family members, other teachers) about student preferences and interests.

d. Match rewards to behaviors. The reward must have adequate value for the student, yet must not be too easily earned.

- Implement Rewards
    a. Present the reward program. Students should understand the target behaviors, expected criteria or performances, and corresponding rewards in advance.
    b. Deliver rewards as planned and scheduled. Remain consistent.
    c. Always state the specific behavior that is being reinforced when delivering rewards. (See Specific Praise STAR Sheet.)
- Evaluate and Adjust Rewards
    a. Maintain records. Institute a record keeping system where you record the delivery of your rewards (or the behaviors demonstrated). Verify if your reward system is working.
    b. Vary rewards over time. This will ensure students won't tire of your rewards.

Keep in Mind...

- Plan time in your weekly schedule for rewards. Provide time as appropriate for: 1) activity and privilege rewards; 2) selection of tangible rewards; and 3) individual student conferences to review progress and to adjust personal behavioral goals or rewards.
- Avoid compromises where a reward is presented prior to the appropriate expected behavior. This encourages students to use future manipulative interactions.
- Verify the effectiveness of potential rewards so they are indeed reinforcing behaviors for individual students. Ensure that the rewards selected are more powerful than other competing reinforcers that sustain misbehavior.
- NEVER use access to basic personal needs as a reward (e.g. water, meals, restroom, etc.).
- Rewards can be used for the whole class or for small groups. *(See Group Contingency STAR Sheet)*

Resources...

Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C. (2003). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Emmer, E. T., Evertson, C. M., & Worsham, M. E. (2003). *Classroom management for secondary teachers* (6th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

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Kameenui, E. J., & Darch, C. B. (1995). *Instructional classroom management: A proactive approach to behavior management*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Levin, J., & Nolan, J. F. (2000). *Principles of classroom management: A professional decision-making model* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Martella, R.C., Nelson, R. J., & Marchand-Martella, N. E. (2003). *Managing disruptive behavior in the schools: A schoolwide, classroom, and individualized social learning approach*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Smith, D. D. & Rivera, D. M. (1993). *Effective discipline* (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Types of Criterion-Specific Rewards

	DESCRIPTION	USES	CAUTIONS	SELECTED EXAMPLES
SOCIAL REWARDS	• provide students with the opportunity to interact with peer(s) of his/her choice • can be used with instructional or noninstructional activities	• can support naturally occurring events in the classroom • can be used effectively with a wide variety of students • can be used with group contingencies	• student-selected interactions can lead to problems if the paired/ grouped students serve as misbehavior catalysts for one another or if social issues (e.g., gossip, dating, etc.) predominate other class activities	• student-selected activity partner/group • conversational free time • student-selected seating
ACTIVITY/PRIVILEGE REWARDS	**Activity rewards:** • enjoyable activities that students find motivating • can be instructional or noninstructional **Privilege rewards:** • less commonplace school-based activities or responsibilities that hold special value **"Escape" rewards:** • removal of an unpleasant activity	• can support naturally occurring events in the school environment • can be used effectively with a wide variety of students • can support completion of less desired activities • "Grandma's Rule": if a student completes a less desired activity (e.g., spelling practice) he/she may then participate in some likable activity (e.g., computer time)	• must comply with school and district procedures • can be difficult to schedule • time to use the earned rewards must be consistently provided • are not always provided immediately but giving praise or social reinforcers when the behavior occurs adjusts for this shortcoming • "escape" rewards such as a homework pass may result in non-mastory of content	**Elementary** • free time activity choice • extra computer time • first in line for recess/lunch/ home • team/line leader • skip even numbered homework problems • classroom helper **Secondary** • listen to music while working (headphones) • sports/art equipment use • cross-age tutor • office aide • homework pass
TANGIBLE/MATERIAL REWARDS	Tangible or material rewards: objects/ edibles that students value and like.	• can be easy to deliver and can be effective, especially with hard to change behaviors • should be paired with praise when delivered so that they can later be faded • teachers should gradually increase the criteria for earning a tangible reward.	• can become costly if expensive consumable items are used • can cause disruption to the normal classroom environment, especially if used continuously • can lose its effectiveness if provided after students have tired of it • different students have different reward choices • edible rewards should not be used frequently: use of edible rewards must take into consideration food allergies, nutritional issues, student and family preferences and school policy	**Elementary** • stickers/removable tattoos • pencils/pens • pencil grips/erasers • stamps/bookmarks • books/posters • clay • recycled games in good condition • small toys (model or mini airplanes, finger skateboards, cars, tops, balls, puzzles) **Secondary** (As relevant above) • stationery • appealing second-hand CDs/ cassette tapes • sunglasses/hats • magazines/comic books **Edibles** • pizza/pizza party • popcorn/pretzels • cookies/brownies • fruits/vegetables • bottled water/sports drink

Encouraging Appropriate Behavior
Choice Making

★ What a STAR Sheet is...

A STAR (STrategies And Resources) Sheet provides you with a description of a well-researched strategy that can help you solve the case studies in this unit.

What It Is...

Choice-making is a strategy that enables students to select from provided options. It can be used to prevent behavior problems and to increase specific behaviors.

What the Research and Resources Say...

- Giving students opportunities to make choices in their daily routines has many benefits including enhanced positive interactions between teachers and students (Jolivette, Stichter & McCormick, 2002), increasing students' assignment completion and accuracy (Cosden, Gannon, & Haring, 1995), and increased student task accuracy (Jolivette, Wehby, Canale, & Massey, 2001). In addition, choice-making heightens student engagement and reduces disruptive behavior (Dunlap et al., 1994; Umbreit & Blair, 1996) as well as enhances student task compliance and decreases student resistance (Kauffman, Mostert, Trent, & Hallahan, 2002; Pacchiano, 2000).
- Providing choices gives students decision-making opportunities that allow them predictability (Jolivette et al., 2002), which for most students with behavioral needs, comes only as a result of their misbehaviors (Van Acker, Grant & Henry, 1996).
- The choices offered and selected should maintain instructional integrity by supporting the instructional objectives for the student (Jolivette et al., 2002).

Tips for Implementation...

- Identify Choice Opportunities and Possible Options
    a. Find out about student learning preferences, likes, and interests. Observing students, interviewing them, and completing learning preference surveys can help you provide effective and individualized options for students.
    b. Develop a general list of options. Possible items include the following:
    - Materials & Media (manipulatives, computer, writing implements, etc)
    - Seating & Grouping Options (alone, with a partner/group, work areas, etc.)
    - Gathering Information (read, research on the internet, interviews, etc.)
    - Demonstrating Knowledge (write, illustrate, oral reports, etc.)
    - Subjects/Instruction (preferred subjects or learning tasks)
    - Scheduling (order of activities, assignments, subjects, etc.)
- Offer Choices
    a. Include choices that are also conducive to your teaching style and your classroom environment. Don't include options you can't live with or that will interrupt learning in the classroom.

- Structure the choices presented. Limit your list of options. Start with 2-3 options to ensure success, particularly with younger children. Don't overwhelm the students or yourself.
- Present options clearly and briefly and ensure that students understand the options.

- Evaluate and Adjust Choice Opportunities
  a. Check to see if choice-making is effective. Ask yourself:
  - Do all students have the opportunity to make choices?
  - Are choices provided daily? Are choices provided consistently?
  - Do students effectively use choice-making opportunities?
  - Is there an impact of choice-making on student participation? Accomplishment? Motivation? Behavior?

  b. Adjust choice-making options and opportunities as needed.

  c. Remember to include variety in the types of choices or options students have.

Keep in Mind...

- *Start small*. Begin a consistent choice-making program in 1–2 academic areas, then extend to other areas. Select an academic area/task that is likely to have the biggest impact for the student's success.
- *Some choice is better than no choice*. Positive behavior can be increased by giving students a choice, even if the options aren't preferred (Dunlap et al., 1994).
- *Avoid negotiations*. Students may pressure teachers to add additional options on the spot. Consider the suggested options for future choice-making situations.
- *Be consistent and honor the choices*. If you do not follow through, this strategy will become ineffective over time.

Resources...

Cosden, M., Gannon, C., & Haring, T. G. (1995). Teacher-control versus student-control over choice of task and reinforcement for students with severe behavior problems. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 5*, 11-27.

Dunlap, G., DePerczel, M., Clarke, S., Wilson, D., Wright, S., White, R., & Gomez, A. (1994). Choice making to promote adaptive behavior for students with emotional and behavioral challenges. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 27*, 505-518.

Jolivette, K., Wehby, J. H., Canale, J., & Massey, N. G. (2001). Effects of choice making opportunities on the behavior of students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders, 26*, 131-145.

Jolivette, K., Stichter, J. P., & McCormick, K. M. (2002). Making choices-Improving behavior-Engaging in learning. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 34*, 24-30.

Umbreit, J., & Blair, K. S. (1996). The effects of preference, choice and attention on problem behavior at school. *Educational and Training in Mental Retardation, 31*, 151-161.

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Encouraging Appropriate Behavior
Effective Rules

★ What a STAR Sheet is...

A STAR (STrategies And Resources) Sheet provides you with a description of a well-researched strategy that can help you solve the case studies in this unit.

What It Is...

Rules are explicit statements that outline the expectations teachers have for students to follow in order to provide a safe, secure, and effective learning environment. Rules provide common guidelines for all students and offer predictability in the learning environment, assisting students in self-regulating their behaviors. Establishing and maintaining the effective use of classroom rules is a critical proactive foundation in preventing potential behavior problems.

What the Research and Resources Say...

- The most effective classrooms are those of teachers who have clear ideas of what is expected of the students and students who have clear ideas of what the teacher expects from them (Evertson, Emmer and Worsham, 2003). Successful teachers not only identify effective rules but also explicitly teach students how to apply these rules (Martella, Nelson, & Marchand-Martella, 2003; Rademacher, Callahan, & Pederson, Seelye, 1998).
- Powerful rules are clear, easily understood, reasonable, observable, necessary, enforceable, and are positively stated (Grossman, 1995; Kerr & Nelson, 2002; Martella et al., 2003; Rademacher et al., 1998; Rhode, Jenson, & Reavis, 1992; Walker, Colvin & Ramsey, 1995).
- For efficiency, experts recommend establishing between three and five classroom rules (Martella et al., 2003; Walker et al., 1995), with no more than eight (Rademacher et al., 1998). Rules should be broad enough to cover as many classroom instructional situations as possible (Smith & Rivera, 1993).
- Student involvement in designing classroom rules can have such benefits as promoting of a sense of student ownership and community, fostering student "buy in," and preparing students for civic responsibility and the democratic process (Malone & Tietjens, 2000; Weinstein, 2003).
- Classroom rules are more general than the specific procedures developed for routine classroom activities (Smith & Rivera, 1993; Weinstein, 2003).

Tips for Implementation...

- Develop and State Rules and Consequences
    a. Identify critical student expectations that are necessary for your classroom in order to promote successful learning and safety. Remember to differentiate specific activity procedures from general classroom rules.
    b. Involve students, as appropriate, in generating ideas for potential rules.
    c. State classroom rules in explicit, clear, precise, positive, and observable terms.

        Example: Bring needed books and supplies to class.

        Nonexample 1: Be ready to learn.

        Nonexample 2: Don't interrupt others.

d. Identify appropriate positive consequences for observing classroom rules and logical negative or corrective consequences for rule infractions.

- Communicate and Teach Rules
    a. Initiate rule discussion and instruction at the start of the school year.
    b. Demonstrate what each rule involves and check for student understanding on the requirements for each rule. Outline the positive and corrective consequences that occur for rule-following and rule-breaking behaviors.
    c. Obtain students' commitment to the rules and consequences (e.g., student signature on a copy of the rules, verbal agreement).
    d. Post the classroom rules in a location and in an appropriate format so that all students have visual access to the display. Additionally, share a copy of the classroom rules with your administrator and with parents.
- Monitor Rules
    a. Maintain consistency in enforcing rules. Apply positive consequences and reinforcement for appropriate use of rules. Be consistent and frequent when you first start the year. Impose logical, preplanned corrective consequences when students choose not to comply with the classroom rules.
    b. Monitor and record reinforcement of rules and enforcement of corrective consequences. Records help teachers identify if misbehavior is related to a particular time or activity and provide liability documentation.
    c. Provide on-going feedback throughout the year on the use of classroom rules and re-teach or remind students about rules as needed. This is especially important after long school breaks or holidays.

Keep in Mind...

- If student behavior interferes with student learning and safety in an area not addressed by your current classroom rules, consider adding to or revising your rules to accommodate this area. If student behavior reflects a misunderstanding of your current rules, check the rule wording, revise if needed, then state, re-teach, and reinforce the rules.

Note: Changing your current rules can send a message to students that rules are not permanent or that you are unsure about the rules. Careful initial selection and phrasing of rules is important.

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Encouraging Appropriate Behavior
Contingent Instructions

★ What a STAR Sheet is...

A STAR (STrategies And Resources) Sheet provides you with a description of a well-researched strategy that can help you solve the case studies in this unit.

What It Is...

Contingent instructions are specific directions given to an individual student to cease an undesired behavior and to engage in a more appropriate alternative.

Example: "Jose, put away the baseball cards and get out your homework folder."

What the Research and Resources Say...

- Reprimands are used commonly by teachers. With reprimands, students are told what behavior to "stop" as opposed to what behavior to "start" (Mather & Goldstein, 2001).
- Private, quiet reprimands are more effective than those audibly delivered in front of the whole class (O'Leary, Kaufman, Kass & Drabman, 1970), and brief, as opposed to lengthy, reprimands improve student compliance (Abramowitz, O'Leary, & Futtersak, 1988). Verbal reprimands are also more effective when provided in close proximity and when eye contact is used (Van Houten, Nau, MacKenzie-Keating, Sameoto, & Colavecchia, 1982).
- Contingent instructions serve as a "coupling request," addressing both the inappropriate and desired behaviors (Connolly, Dowd, Criste, Nelson, & Tobias, 1995).

Tips for Implementation...

- Decide When to Use Contingent Instructions
    a. Use contingent instructions for key behaviors that interfere with successful learning. Identify behaviors related to breaking classroom rules and procedures, to disrupting the instructional activity, or to potentially harming the child or others.
    b. Use contingent instructions with behavioral expectations you are certain a student understands and can perform. Avoid directions that ask a student to address more than one behavior.
- Implement Contingent Instructions
    a. Be immediate, contingent, positive, and specific. Include in your instruction: 1) the specific behavior that should be terminated, and 2) the appropriate behavior.

    Example: "Alice, please put away your hairbrush and take out your planner."

    Nonexample: "Alice, stop playing with your hairbrush. We talked about supplies needed to start class yesterday. I'm not sure why you don't have your planner out, but take it out right now."

    b. Be nonjudgmental, definite, and clear. Use precise statements and avoid questions. Example: "Levi, your hands are pushing Patrick. Please put them at your side." Nonexample: "Don't you want to go to recess, Levi? Follow our rule for lining-up so you can go outside like all

the good students."

c. Be private and individual. Make certain you have the student's attention by inserting the student's name in your instruction.

d. Be neutral. Use a calm, polite, firm and typical voice. Make sure your body language and voice tone are not emotional.

e. Be resolute and mean what you say. Savvy students will know if you are a teacher who gives several opportunities before they really need to comply.

Example: "Justin, put your magazine in your backpack. You need to begin taking notes."

Nonexample: "Justin, for the umpteenth time get to work. Put away the magazine and begin taking notes."

f. Be reinforcing. Make sure you praise and reinforce the student immediately for display of the correct behavior.

- Evaluate and Adjust Contingent Instructions

a. Regularly evaluate your use of contingent instructions by asking yourself:

- Has the student stopped the nonproductive behavior and started the more appropriate task? If not, consider if your attention (while brief and corrective) serves as a reinforcer for the misbehavior.
- Have I reinforced and praised the student once the desired behavior was shown? You should see a change in future recurrence of the appropriate behavior.
- Have I delivered the contingent instruction appropriately? If the student exhibits a more negative reaction, check the ratio of your positive to negative feedback for the student.
- Am I swamped with a need for many contingent instructions? In this case, evaluate your rules, procedures, and consistency in enforcement. Use rule reminders, re-teach, additionally reinforce, and/or revise some of your classroom rules and procedures as needed.

Keep in Mind...

- Consider allowing a brief pause between the initial instruction to cease the inappropriate behavior and the subsequent request for the correct behavior. You may find that the student immediately and naturally engages in the correct behavior without additional direction.
- Verbal interventions, like corrective directions, are typically used after other teacher nonverbal cues (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, proximity control) have been tried to redirect the misbehavior. (Levin & Nolan, 2000; Walker, Colvin & Ramsey, 1995; Weinstein, 2003).
- If confrontation occurs, avoid arguments and resist the temptation to have the last word (Kerr & Nelson, 2002). You are a primary model for appropriate behavior in your classroom. Set the tone by trying another type of consequence or strategy.

Resources...

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Encouraging Appropriate Behavior
Group Contingency

★ What a STAR Sheet is...

A STAR (STrategies And Resources) Sheet provides you with a description of a well-researched strategy that can help you solve the case studies in this unit.

What It Is...

A **group contingency** is a group reinforcement technique that capitalizes on peer influence by setting a group goal and/or implementing a group consequence for behavior. The purpose of this strategy is to prevent behavioral problems, increase appropriate behaviors, and/or to decrease incorrect behaviors, depending on how the contingency is engineered.

Types of Group Contingencies

Type	*Definition*	*Example*
✔ Dependent	One individual (or a small group) earns a privilege or reward for peers by behaving appropriately.	Susan earns five minutes of free time for the entire class because she did not argue with her partner during reading.
✔ Independent	Individuals earn reinforcement when they achieve a goal established for the group. The same contingency applies to each student. However, one student's behavior does not impact the group outcome.	Every student who achieves 90% or better on the Thursday spelling test gets a homework pass.
✔ Interdependent	The class, or a group within the class, earns a special reward when every individual in the identified group meets an established goal.	When the entire class is on time and seated at the beginning of history class for one week, every class member earns 10 bonus points on the weekly test.

(Smith & Rivera, 1993)

What the Research and Resources Say...

- Group contingencies have been shown to be very effective in influencing the behavior of small and large groups at various ages (Smith & Rivera, 1993).
- Each type of group contingency has possibilities and pitfalls (Kauffman, Mostert, Trent, & Hallahan, 2002):
  a. *Dependent group contingency* is helpful for a student with low social status because the student can earn rewards for the group. However, the student's standing will worsen if s/he doesn't earn the reward; therefore, ensure that the student is capable of the behavior.

b. *Independent group contingency* has little risk of peer pressure. However, it also has minimal peer momentum, modeling, or camaraderie to support the target behavior.

c. *Interdependent group contingency* can apply positive peer influence. However, students may complain about, sabotage, or harass others if they believe there is unjust accountability for the behavior of others or uneven composition of groups in skills, abilities, etc.

- Interdependent and dependent contingencies are the most effective in reducing inappropriate behaviors (Gresham & Gresham, 1982).

Tips for Implementation...

- Identify the Target Behavior & Contingency Type
    a. Select the behavior that needs to be changed.
    b. Select the appropriate and most advantageous contingency for the behavior.
    - For changing a single behavior of one child, consider the dependent group contingency.
    - For changing the behavior of a group, select the independent or interdependent group contingency.
    c. Establish a reasonable performance standard for the attainment of the reward.
- Prepare the Plan
    a. Identify the reward. Solicit student input in choosing an appropriate reinforcer.
    b. Schedule when students will receive the reward.
    c. Communicate your plan with the class/group. Seek student commitment.
- Implement the Plan
    a. Begin using the contingency plan, remaining consistent with your expectations and consequences.
- Evaluate and Adjust the Plan
    a. Collect data on the effectiveness of the plan.
    b. Determine how or if you will continue to use the plan. Ask yourself:
    - Should I change the behavior(s) addressed? Decide if your plan has been successful in improving the behavior and consider other behaviors that need to be targeted.
    - Should I adjust or change the contingency? Find out which students were successful in achieving your standards. If some were not successful, examine your plan carefully and modify it.

Keep in Mind...

- Group contingency requires more planning and intervention than other techniques.
- Make certain that students can truly earn additional privileges or rewards. Teachers should add a new reward (or increase a current reward) and not use an established reinforcer (e.g., scheduled break, recess, etc.) as part of the contingency plan.
- Many professionals caution against the practice of taking away rewards based on a dependent or interdependent contingency. This can set up a negative atmosphere in the classroom and should be avoided.

Research-Based Programs

- The Good Behavior Game (Barrish, Saunders, & Wolf, 1969)
- The Good Student Game (Babyak, Luze, & Kamps, 2000)
- Tootling (Skinner, Cashwell, & Skinner, 2000)

Resources...

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